T O U R I S M

The Tourism Resource Council:

A Mechanism for Representing the Tourism Industry's Interests on Natural Resource Management in British Columbia

ECONOMIC & REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT

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The Tourism Resource Council:

A Mechanism for Representing the Tourism Industry's Interests on Natural Resource Management

Prepared for:

Industry, Science and Technology Canada
Ministry of Development, Trade and Tourism

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The responsibility for the content of this report is the consultant's alone, and the conclusions reached herein do not necessarily reflect the opinions of those who assisted during the course of this investigation nor the federal and provincial governments which funded the study.

Industry, Science and Technology Canada

Industrie, Sciences et Technologie Canada

British Columbia
Ministry of Development, Trade and Tourism

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PART I

BACKGROUND

TOURISM RESOURCE COUNCIL

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Background

Many tourism businesses in British Columbia are directly dependent on the natural resource base for their tourism product. Fishing lodges, guide outfitters, coastal cruising charters and backcountry skiing lodges to name a few, all depend on the natural environment of the province. Other operators such as major ski resorts, though perhaps not directly dependent on natural resources, also face environmental and resource problems, such as the maintenance of viewscapes around the resort. Hotel and motels, even in urban areas, derive some portion of their income from visitors attracted to the province by the natural beauty and attractions we have in British Columbia. Relatively few tourism operations in the province are entirely untouched by the problems facing resource management in the province.

A sustainable natural resource base is critical to the viability of many tourism businesses. For example:

- guide outfitters depend on productive wildlife habitat and wilderness
- river rafting operators depend on the maintenance of remote wilderness areas in which to offer their product
- saltwater sportfishing lodges depend on a sound recreational salmon fishery
- cruise ship operators depend on the spectacular scenery of the Inside Passage
- heli and cat ski operators depend on large areas of undeveloped land to offer powder skiing experiences.

The Ministry of Development, Trade and Tourism recognizes that the tourism industry needs to deal with resource questions on a daily basis, both through tourism associations (sector and regional) and individual operators. To help the industry in its efforts, the Ministry has initiated this study to determine how best the industry can represent itself on such matters.

In the recent past there have been many situations where the tourism industry has gathered together to protect tourism resources. The Pacific Charter Boat Association and Cruise Lines, together with recreational groups, have worked together to protect the Inside Passage. Sector associations such as the B.C. Guest Ranch Association, and the B.C. Fishing Resorts and Outfitters Association have dealt with resource issues relating to wildlife and fish habitat, wilderness and scenic values for as long as these groups have existed. In addition to such

issues, these organizations are also being asked to review land use plans, as well as new policies and regulations being put forward by various provincial ministries. As a result, more time is being taken up to protect resource interests and to participate in resource forums such as the Forest Resources Commission and the B.C. Roundtable on the Environment.

In 1986, an organization was formed to address these concerns for all adventure travel operators. The Wilderness Tourism Council (WTC) was loosely structured as a ten member council with informal links to established adventure tourism sector associations (e.g., Guide Outfitters Association of B.C., Heli-skiing Association, and others). The Council adopted as its mandate the promotion of greater recognition of the economic importance of the adventure tourism industry and of the value of its resource base. The WTC worked to achieve policy and legislation aimed at protecting the integrity of the resource base through such activities as research, public information, education and lobbying. *The Council has come to recognize that natural resources are important to more than just the adventure tourism sector and identified the need for a mechanism by which the industry as a whole can represent itself on natural resource management.*

1.2 The Purpose of the Study

The WTC in collaboration with the Ministry of Development, Trade and Tourism has commissioned this study to assist the industry in determining the best means by which it can adequately represent itself on resource concerns. The objective of the study is to define an appropriate structure and responsibilities for a mechanism by which the industry can address resource concerns.

1.3 Methodology

A Steering Committee was established to provide overall direction for the study and generate feedback to the consultants. Comprised of both government and private sector representatives, the Steering Committee included representation from members of the Wilderness Tourism Council. The first step in the study was a comprehensive needs assessment. This was accomplished through a survey of executives and members within sector and regional tourism associations. Government employees charged with managing resources and dealing with resource issues were also interviewed. The focus of the interview process was to determine:

- the level of interest concerning resource issues on the part of these associations
- the resource concerns currently facing the industry
- the steps taken to deal with resource concerns
- suggestions for a more effective approach on the part of the industry to resource issues.

The interview process was conducted with the use of a questionnaire guide (see Annex A) and interviews were held either by telephone and/or in person. A list of associations and agencies interviewed is provided in Exhibit 1.1.

The results of the interview process were used to identify various options for an industry mechanism to address resource concerns. The results were also used to evaluate the options identified. The option identified by the Steering Committee as preferable - that of a resource council - was then tested with selected industry representatives and refined for presentation in this report.

1.4 The Purpose of the Report

This report presents the findings of this survey, discusses the approach recommended by the Steering Committee and proposes a draft business plan based on the recommended approach. As any mechanism must ultimately be approved and adopted by industry, the plan presented here must be regarded as preliminary. The purpose of this report is to present the proposed business plan to industry for their consideration. The objective of the plan is to establish a more effective mechanism for representing tourism interests on natural resource management.

Section 2.0 of this report presents a summary of the findings from the interview process and the conclusions of the Steering Committee. A formal business plan for a Tourism Resource Council is presented in Section 3.0.

Exhibit 1.1: List of Tourism Associations and Provincial Ministries Interviewed

Associations

Association of Canadian Mountain Guides of B.C.
Backcountry Mountain Hut and Lodge Operators of B.C.
B.C. Guest Ranch Association
B.C. Fishing Resorts and Outfitters Association
B.C. Heli Ski Operators Association
Trade Association of Sea Kayaking
Guide Outfitters Association of B.C.
Okanagan Similkameen Tourist Association
High Country Tourist Association
Rocky Mountain Visitors Association
Kootenay Country Tourist Association
Cariboo Tourist Association
North by Northwest Tourism Association
Tourism Association of South Western B.C.
Peace River Alaska Highway Tourist Association
B.C. Cruise Industry Association
B.C. Motel, Campgrounds and Resort Association
B.C. & Yukon Hotel Association
Canada West Ski Area Association
Sport Fishing Institute
Pacific Charter Boat Association

B.C. Ministries

Environment
Forests
Crown Lands
Native Affairs
Municipal Affairs
Tourism
Parks
Energy Mines and Petroleum Resources

2.0 The Need For A Tourism Resource Council

The Steering Committee adopted the principle throughout this study that any proposed mechanism for addressing the resource base must reflect the view of a wide spectrum of the industry. The findings presented below which form the basis for the Tourism Resource Council business plan summarize the results of the interview process and the deliberations of the Steering Committee concerning an appropriate mechanism to recommend to industry. More detailed interview results are presented in Annex B of this report.

2.1 Feedback From Associations

The major finding of the survey was that industry reported a definite need for an industry-wide mechanism to address the future of the province's resource base. Beyond that, there was a wide range of opinions as to the possible form which this mechanism might take. The survey also found differences between the way the three major industry association groups approach resource issues.

1. Sector Associations

- Some sector associations spend 50% to 80% of their time on resource issues. None of the sector associations had, however, established budgets for resource management.

- In considering a possible mechanism, sector associations commented that:

  - they wished to retain their independence to address issues
  - funding from association members was unlikely to be forthcoming in the near future
  - the recognition given resource concerns by the Ministry of Development, Trade and Tourism from its recently established Sustainable Development Branch has been very effective and the Branch could play a key role in coordination, research and information support for an industry-wide mechanism.

2. Regional Tourism Associations

- All associations identified resource issues as a concern for their organization and most said that they were important to the majority of their members.

- Most associates had neither the budget nor staff to address resource management concerns on behalf of their members.

- Given their marketing mandate, most deferred resource use issues to other organizations or processes.

- In considering an industry wide mechanism, regional tourism associations reported that:

  - maintaining formal lines of communication to member organizations would be crucial
  - the body should take a province-wide perspective but in so doing, regional concerns must be properly integrated
  - funding would be difficult to obtain directly from their members.

3. Hotel, Motel, Campground and Cruise-Related Associations

- Resource issues were not specifically identified as a priority, nor were budgets or staff allocated for this area.

- Funding from the private sector woul be difficult except in more specific situations where members might have a direct, vested interest.

- Many felt that underlying government funding support of 50% or more should be provided.

- In considering a mechanism, these association representatives suggested that:

  - formal communication would be vital between the organization and member groups
  - the council should be objective, with a well-balanced membership
  - consideration might be given to re-creation of a TIABC organization with resource issues being a key focus.

2.2 Feedback from Government

Several government agencies were interviewed to determine their perspectives on the need for a tourism industry mechanism for resource issues. *All agency representatives interviewed stated that an organization was needed to represent the resource interests of the tourism industry as a whole.*

In support of the need for such an organization, government representatives reported that government involvement with the industry has generally been sporadic. Contact has been with individual operators and associations as issues arose. They suggested that the fragmentation of the tourism sector and the lack of a clearly recognized organization which could speak for the

entire industry was one of the main reasons for the present "ad hoc" approach between government and industry. Some suggested that a lack of strategic thinking by industry and government had created problems for government agencies in understanding what the priorities of the tourism industry were. Therefore, they supported the creation of a mechanism as it would establish a point of contact with the industry for dealing with policy issues and resource concerns that affect tourism.

Government agency representatives also welcomed the recent initiative of the Ministry of Development, Trade and Tourism to establish a Sustainable Development Branch.

2.3 Suggestions for an Industry Mechanism

The tourism associations and government agency representatives consulted were unanimous in their support of a better mechanism for addressing resource concerns for the industry. On the question of the nature of such a mechanism, opinions were more widely varied, ranging from an advisory model to a new umbrella organization. Within this continuum, three options became apparent:

1. **The Advisory Model** - involving an "advisory committee" drawn from representatives of associations who would co-ordinate efforts with the Tourism Sustainable Development Branch. The Branch in turn would provide a facilitation role and work with industry on resource use research priorities and monitoring of upcoming policies and regulations affecting the resource base.

2. **A Council** - involving a consensus-based organization comprised of representatives from all interested tourism associations and fulfilling both an advisory and advocacy role for industry on province-wide resource issues.

3. **A New Industry Organization** - accepting membership from individual tourism businesses with an interest in resource issues and representing the industry on a province-wide basis.

The differences between these mechanisms is the degree to which the tourism industry decides to organize itself to deal with resource issues and the level of independence from government that the proposed organization wishes to maintain. The question is which point in the continuum of possible mechanisms does the industry select in order to fill the perceived gap in its approach to resource issues.

2.4 The Recommended Mechanism

In considering the feedback from tourism associations and government, there are four main messages which serve to define the preferred direction of industry.

1. Existing associations wish to maintain their independence in order to address issues of special concern to their members. Association representatives suggested that strong coordination between their association and the Council is required and that the Council deal primarily with province-wide issues.

2. A strategic perspective on resource issues is necessary. Government advised that one voice from the tourism industry on province-wide issues would facilitate the process of attempting to accommodate the industry's perspective in integrated planning. Associations advised that there is a need for individual associations to collaborate on province-wide issues.

3. Funding is likely to be a problem, at least in the start-up phase.

4. Any mechanism must include a mandate for advocacy.

More than any other criterion, the feedback from tourism associations indicated that independence of existing associations was the most important consideration. Taking into account these views, the Steering Committee concluded that a "council" approach is the preferred direction for a mechanism to address resource issues. The council option would not replace existing tourism industry associations but rather represent them and provide an appropriate link between industry and government on province-wide resource issues.

On the basis of this recommended structure, a proposed business plan was developed, described in Part II, which would enable such a Tourism Resource Council to become operational.

The proposed business plan presented in Part II is organized into three sections:

Section 3.0	Management and Operations Plan
Section 4.0	Programs of the Tourism Resource Council
Section 5.0	Financing and Implementation

The content of the business plan draws extensively from the interview results with both tourism industry associations and government representatives.

PART II

PROPOSED BUSINESS PLAN

3.0 Management And Operations

3.1 Management Plan

The proposed Management Plan has the following elements:

- scope
- mission statement
- operating principles
- organizational structure.

Scope

The policies and operations of the Tourism Resource Council should be focused on natural resource management and issues as they affect tourism. While a few associations suggested that a "TIABC" organization was necessary, most argued that the focus on the natural resources was appropriate and would complement existing association efforts directed at product and market development.

Mission Statement

The Tourism Resource Council will work to maintain a sustainable environment which can support the tourism industry by providing a unified industry voice regarding proper natural resource management planning, legislation, regulations, and practice.

This proposed mission statement for the Tourism Resource Council reflects the position of the majority of associations that the Council should provide both advocacy and advisory functions in representing the tourism industry.

Operating Principles

There are several operating principles proposed for the Council, all designed to ensure that it is responsive to the needs of the tourism industry and effective in representing those needs. These are:

A province-wide perspective. The Council should focus on province-wide natural resource issues which affect the tourism industry. This perspective could be focused on policy initiatives such as tenure for commercial backcountry recreation and/or precedent setting issues such as the designation of an outstanding wilderness river for protection and/or the implementation of an integrated management plan that would benefit operators in a variety of sectors.

An advocacy role. The Council should perform an advocacy role in representing the interests and concerns of the tourism industry regarding resource issues and resource management practices to government, the public, and other resource industry associations. The Council would deal in most cases with the executive of other resource industry associations and public advocacy groups and with government at the senior level.

An advisory role. The Council should provide support and background information on resource management and issues to existing tourism associations. It should also provide an advisory function to government where agencies are engaged in policy development or planning processes, and to other resource industry associations (logging, mining, commercial fishing) where the exchange of information may divert the industries from potential conflict situations.

Support for existing associations. The Council should complement the efforts of existing tourism industry associations in addressing the resource concerns of their members. The Council should not overlap with existing association efforts and initiatives, except where such associations seek the support and help of the Council.

Open membership for associations. The Council, in order to represent and to be seen to represent the tourism industry on province-wide resource issues, must operate on an open membership basis to all tourism associations. Representatives from all sector, regional and other tourism associations should be sought to ensure that the Council effectively represents the provincial tourism industry. As new tourism associations are created (e.g. sector associations representing specific product areas), these associations should be encouraged to send representatives to the Council. The individual tourism business would be represented through its sector or regional association and would approach the Council through its representative organization.

Responsive to member associations. The Council will only be effective if it is responsive to, and represents the concerns of participating associations. The Council must therefore be constantly vigilant about seeking the views of member associations and ensuring that it does not "assume a life of its own" in competition with the programs and activities of existing tourism associations.

Effective communication to members. The Council should develop a means of achieving regular two way communication with all member associations on the Council's activities, priorities and plans. The agenda of the Council must be the agenda of the tourism industry in order for it to fulfill its mandate. Thus, communication and mechanisms to ensure that industry concerns are properly represented is essential.

Effective communications with government, the public and other resource industries. Professional and credible communication with government, the public and other resource industry associations must underlie all activities of the Council. While an important part of the

Council's mandate should be to educate these audiences about the importance of the resource base to the tourism industry, the Council must also ensure that it always takes a balanced and objective approach in representing the tourism industry and its concerns. In other words, the Council should establish positions which are reasonable, make a positive contribution to resolution of any given issue, and take into account the public interest in the formulation of all industry positions on issues.

Organizational Structure

The general characteristics of the organizational structure recommended for the Council are set out below.

Council Membership. Each tourism industry association should designate a representative from their organization to sit on the Council. The choice of representative would be left to the sector associations, though to be effective, the representative should be a member of the executive of the association. In addition, these associations should also designate an alternate, which in many cases may be the Executive Director of the association. The Council would not be open for membership by individual operators. The individual operator would join an appropriate association and be represented by their designate.

Decision-making. Voting members of the Council should be restricted to those individuals designated by associations (including their alternates). It is expected that the majority of the day-to-day Council decisions will be made on a consensus basis. In instances where unanimity is not possible it is recommended that decisions be determined by a vote. Therefore the Council should, at the outset, define a voting mechanism including a definition of what will constitute a majority decision. This is not a trivial matter. The Council must act, and be seen to act as a representative voice of the tourism industry on resource management practices and issues.

Frequency of Meetings. The Council should only require two to three meetings of the full membership per year. More frequent meetings are unrealistic given the cost and difficulty in scheduling meetings with representatives located throughout the province.

Executive Committee. The Council should select a chairperson and Executive Committee of, say, 4 or 5 members who would manage the affairs of the Council on a more frequent basis.

Council staff. At a minimum, it is recommended that a full time Executive Director and part time administrative secretary be retained by the Council to carry out the Council's directions on a day-to-day basis. Given the mandate indicated as appropriate by tourism industry association representatives and the range of issues which they identified that a Council might pursue, a full time Executive Director in the start-up period is essential.

Council Headquarters. It is recommended that the Council office be located in Vancouver and that Council meetings also be held there. This recommendation is made on a purely practical basis. Given the likelihood of representation from all over the province, the most cost-effective meeting location is Vancouver, given present airline routings. As well, the provincial media, head offices of the major industries and their councils are situated here. The provincial government offices are located nearby in Victoria.

The operational roles and responsibilities of the organization are summarized in Exhibit 3.1.

Exhibit 3.1: Tourism Resource Council - Operational Roles and Responsibilities

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Tourism Resource Council

- Represents the tourism industry on province-wide resource issues
- Sets priorities and programs on an annual basis for Council activities
- Monitors and reviews progress of the Council
- Attends high-level advocacy and public relations meetings/events
- Ensures full communication to member associations on Council activities

Executive Committee

- Executes Council policy by providing day-to-day guidance to Executive Director on work programs, policy issues, budgeting
- Establishes meeting schedules and agendas for full Council meetings
- Confers with full Council as necessary through telephone polling and/or conference calls between meetings
- Organizes Council member representation at key meetings

Executive Director

- Implements programs and policies of Council
- Prepares budgets, issue identification and planning reports for Council
- Monitors and reports on progress and program effectiveness
- Establishes and manages the Council office and support staff

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3.2 Operational Procedures

As part of this business plan, several programs are proposed based on the feedback received from tourism industry associations. They include:

- services to member associations
- public relations
- advocacy program
- research
- administration

These programs are regarded as necessary start-up activities for the Council and would be refined and modified as appropriate over time. The programs are discussed in detail in Section 4.0. The focus and content of the programs would be set by the Council. The Council must establish several operational procedures which would provide the basis for shaping and priorizing the content of the various programs of the Council. The procedures which are recommended include:

- issues management - what issues the Council will address in any given year
- program planning - what programs will be implemented based on the Council's priorities
- budgeting - what monetary and human resources will be assigned to implement Council priorities.

Issue Management

The central activity of the Council should be to represent the tourism industry's viewpoint on matters which affect the resource base upon which the industry depends for its viability. This representation can range from pro-active lobbying (e.g., providing industry input on government initiatives in the development stages) to a response role such as providing an industry position on government decisions. Representation of the industry's position by the Council should be predicated on sound strategies for resource use to which the industry subscribes. Issues such as land use management, habitat conservation, environmental impacts, user carrying capacity and environmental codes of conduct as they relate to the tourism industry are examples of areas where industry policy/strategies need to be developed. Research and educational initiatives are also important activities which would assist the Council in establishing its position on resource managment practices and issues.

Clearly, the Council cannot adequately address all issues or concerns facing the industry at any given time, especially in its formative stages. Therefore a formal process of issue identification, selection, and response is required which would help the Council to address priority issues in the most effective way possible. A process for issue management is outlined below.

1. Issue Identification

The Council members would bring forth resource issues and concerns from their respective sector and regional associations. In addition to such input, potential issues or concerns would also be identified through ongoing contact and communication with government and other resource industries. A suggested approach to issue identification would involve:

- a canvassing of Council members by the Executive Director to develop a list of potential issues for Council consideration

- supplementing that list with potential issues from other sources (e.g., government, other resource industries).

The Executive Director would be responsible for preparing a comprehensive list of issues for the full Council meeting where the Council would establish program planning for the next year's activities. The Executive Committee could revise the list between full Council meetings as the need arises.

Issues should not be restricted to activities of government of other industries which may have negative impacts on the tourism industry. They also include the need for greater awareness of the needs of resource-based tourism among the many client groups of the industry (e.g., the need for public relations) and issues which arise between sector associations of the tourism industry where conflict resolution is appropriate to resolve "internal" problems within the industry. Finally, the issues could relate to the effectiveness of the Council itself. For example, feedback from industry associations may be that the Council's communication to associations needs to be improved.

2. Establishing Council Priorities

The Council must priorize these issues in order to develop a manageable short list which they can address effectively. Therefore, a formal evaluation approach to assist with setting priorities is recommended as follows:

Criteria for selecting issues appropriate for the Council

- Can a sector association deal with the issue more effectively than the Council?
- Does it affect more than one sector association?
- Is it provincial or regional in nature?

Criteria for priorizing issues

- Is the issue precedent setting (e.g., establishing a precedent which may be applied province-wide)?
- What is the urgency for addressing the issue?
- Is a resolution of the issue achievable?
- Is it feasible to address the issue given the financial and staff resources of the Council?
- What are the funding possibilities associated with addressing the issue?
- What is the impact on the tourism industry if action on the issue is delayed?

The application of these evaluation criteria to the issues would in many cases require "pre-research" on the part of the Executive Director or Council members so that sufficient information is available for the Council's deliberations on priority setting. For example, if a government agency is requesting input on draft policies which would affect the tourism industry, then the governments' schedule for consultation must be known in order for Council to properly time the Council's action on that issue.

3. Responding to the Priority Issues

Once priority issues are established by the Council, several steps would be required to fully address these issues. This of course would vary with the complexity of the issue and its scope. Generally speaking however, there are certain generic steps which the Council would follow, as set out below:

Organizing to deal with the issue. This would involve the delegation of responsibility to selected members of the Council with the support of the Executive Director

Undertaking supporting research. This step would involve technical analysis (e.g., what information is available, what data gaps exist, how to fill the data gaps, etc) and strategic research (e.g., what are the views of government, the tourism industry, other industries, the public and media on the issue). In some cases, this may require contract research to fully "scope out" the issue and possible responses by the Council.

Formulation of a Council position, response, and/or policy. This would be prepared by Council members responsible for the issue in association with the Executive Director and brought back to the Council, usually at their bi-annual meeting or, if necessary, through a teleconference.

Implementing an issues resolution approach. This may be as simple as delivering an industry response to a government agency request for input (e.g. Parks 90 program) or, in more complicated areas, could involve an ongoing advocacy or advisory role with government or other

resource industry associations (e.g., participation in a policy development process established by government on a major issue such as maintaining viewscapes along a key tourism route). In the case of major issues the response may include presentations to senior level bureaucrats and Cabinet. Specific need for public relations activities, newsletter campaigns, and other techniques to ensure that the tourism industry perspective is properly communicated, will depend on the nature of the issue.

Program Planning

The Council will use the issue management process to priorize the issues. Depending on the complexity of the issue, the Council may wish to approach its resolution from a number of fronts. Actions could include:

- research - to develop a full understanding of the issue and its implications
- public relations - to raise the profile of the issue amongst the tourism industry itself, other industry stakeholders, and government
- advocacy - involving formulating and presenting the tourism industry's position on the most effective means to resolve the issues.

An example of a resource related issue in which all three types of actions are warranted is pollution of coastal waters (in a recent survey of marine tourism operators, they identified pollution as one of the top three concerns for their businesses). Indeed, most province-wide issues are likely to require a number of complementary approaches in order for the Council to be fully effective.

The priority issues identified would provide the basis for setting the Council's agenda for the next year. These would generally take the form of "programs" defining how the Council would implement issue resolution. Suggested start-up programs are discussed in more detail in Section 4.0. The Executive Director would be responsible for the day-to-day management of the programs.

The programs would be planned and reviewed on an annual basis. Exhibit 3.2 illustrates the annual program planning process for the Council, its Executive Committee and Executive Director. An important aspect of this planning process would be an annual report prepared by the Executive Director for the Council. The report should:

- review progress on program objectives established by the Council at the end of the previous year
- evaluate the effectiveness of the program activities conducted during the year
- recommend issues to be addressed in the forthcoming year

- recommend amendments including cost implications to the Council's programs.
- recommend new initiatives.

This annual report would provide the basis for establishing the next year's work program and budget.

Budgeting

Program planning would identify each year's activities and reflect the Council's financial capability. Annual budgeting on the part of the Council should follow from the Council's decisions on Program Planning. Budgeting priorities would be decided at the full meeting of the Council, based on the recommendation of the Executive Director. Adjustments to the budget based on decisions of the Council concerning the priorities which they place on issues to be addressed may be required. While it is unrealistic to expect that a final detailed budget can be approved at the full meeting, certainly general spending guidelines could be established and the detailed budget prepared upon completion of the meeting. The detailed budget could be approved by the Executive Committee shortly after the annual meeting.

4.0 Programs of Tourism Resource Council

The input of association representatives during this study has been used as the basis for designing the recommended programs of the Council. The programs are defined in broad categories of action areas, consistent with the input received during the course of this study. These include:

- services to member associations
- public relations
- advocacy
- research
- administration.

The program areas, so defined, should cover all of the possible actions which the Council may consider for any given issue. They also serve to reflect the identified needs for a Council which effectively communicates and provides support to its members, increases the profile of the tourism industry, represents the industry in resource management, and undertakes research and education related to the resource issues which the industry faces.

4.1 Services to Member Associations

It is suggested that the Council can play a very effective role in providing information and support to member associations who are faced with resource issues at the local, regional, or sector specific levels. The services to member associations should include:

- monitoring government activities and programs (both provincial and federal) which may affect the tourism industry

- providing updates on resource issues and/or forums which can potentially affect tourism; examples include the deliberations of the Forest Resource Commission and the B.C. Roundtable on the Environment and Economy

- providing indepth analysis or explanation of resource issues which would be helpful to sector associations in formulating their own approaches to resource management concerns and issues

- providing advice to member associations on government processes including an advisory information service to help associations deal with issues, a list of key government personnel and information on agency mandates, regulations and procedures which affect tourism.

Communication Tools

In the formative stages of Council operation, three communication mechanisms are recommended for informing member associations of Council activities. The first is a newsletter approach which reports on the results of the Council's monitoring activities, provides indepth analyses of selected issues or resource management practices, and provides relevant news items for member associations. In the case of the newsletter approach, it is suggested that the Council print sufficient newsletters for the memberships of all member associations and deliver these to the associations' Executive Directors who in turn would distribute it to their memberships.

The second tool is the maintenance of a Council office which member associations could contact for advice and information on resource management practices and issues.

The third tool involves the development and distribution of "fact sheets" on topics ranging from the Council's position on specific resource management practices and issues, to discussions on regulatory processes. These fact sheets could be made available to member associations as well as distributed to government, other resource industry associations, the public and the media.

While the orientation of these tools is primarily with effective communication to member associations, each can serve an important role in the public relations efforts of the Council directed to the public and other interest groups. Primary and secondary roles for each of the communication tools are summarized below in Exhibit 4.1.

Exhibit 4.1: Communicating with the Tourism Industry

Communication Tool	Frequency	Primary Role: Membership Information/Education	Secondary Role: Public Relations/Education
Newsletters	Quarterly	Informing members of Council activities	Information source for other stakeholders
Council Office	Permanent	Providing a source of information/referral for the tourism industry on resource concerns	Providing a point of contact for government, other industries, public media
Fact Sheets	As Requested	In-depth discussion of resource issues for members, industry profiles for use by operators in their own public relations, advocacy efforts	Education, profile raising for other stakeholders on issues and industry

Possible layouts for the newsletter series and fact sheets are shown in Exhibits 4.2 and 4.3 respectively. The fact sheets, should not be restricted to a discussion of resource issues and practices. Fact sheets could also be prepared that profile the tourism industry and its reliance on the province's resource-base.

Ethics of the Tourism Industry

There is a growing interest in the tourism industry and elsewhere to develop codes of ethics designed to encourage responsible and professional industry practices. Several industry associations in British Columbia now have a code of ethics for their members and others (e.g., the British Columbia Freshwater Resorts and Outfitters Association) are now in the process of completing such a code. While individual associations adopt codes to govern all aspects of their members' practices, it behooves the Council to establish an industry-wide code of ethics related to resource use. This should express the ethics to which the tourism industry subscribes and cover the following areas:

- adherence to regulations
- commitment to sustainable resource use
- participation in activities to protect and enhance the resource base
- promotion of sustainable tourism industry products

A draft code which could be used as a starting point is provided in Exhibit 4.4. In addition to a code for members, the Council could provide an excellent vehicle for the tourism industry to work with government on code of ethics directed to the public. For example, British Columbia has recently published a code of ethics for wildlife viewing which is targeted to the general public. It is expected that the provincial government will develop codes for other outdoor activities over time and the Council could provide a forum for consultation on the content of such codes.

Workshops and Conferences

The Council could consider hosting an annual conference for tourism operators, aimed at two general objectives:

- providing educational opportunities to operators in the form of workshops on resource management practices and/or issues

- providing a forum for information exchange with government and other resource industries.

Exhibit 4.2 Sample Newsletter Structure

4 page - 8 ½ x 11 folded:

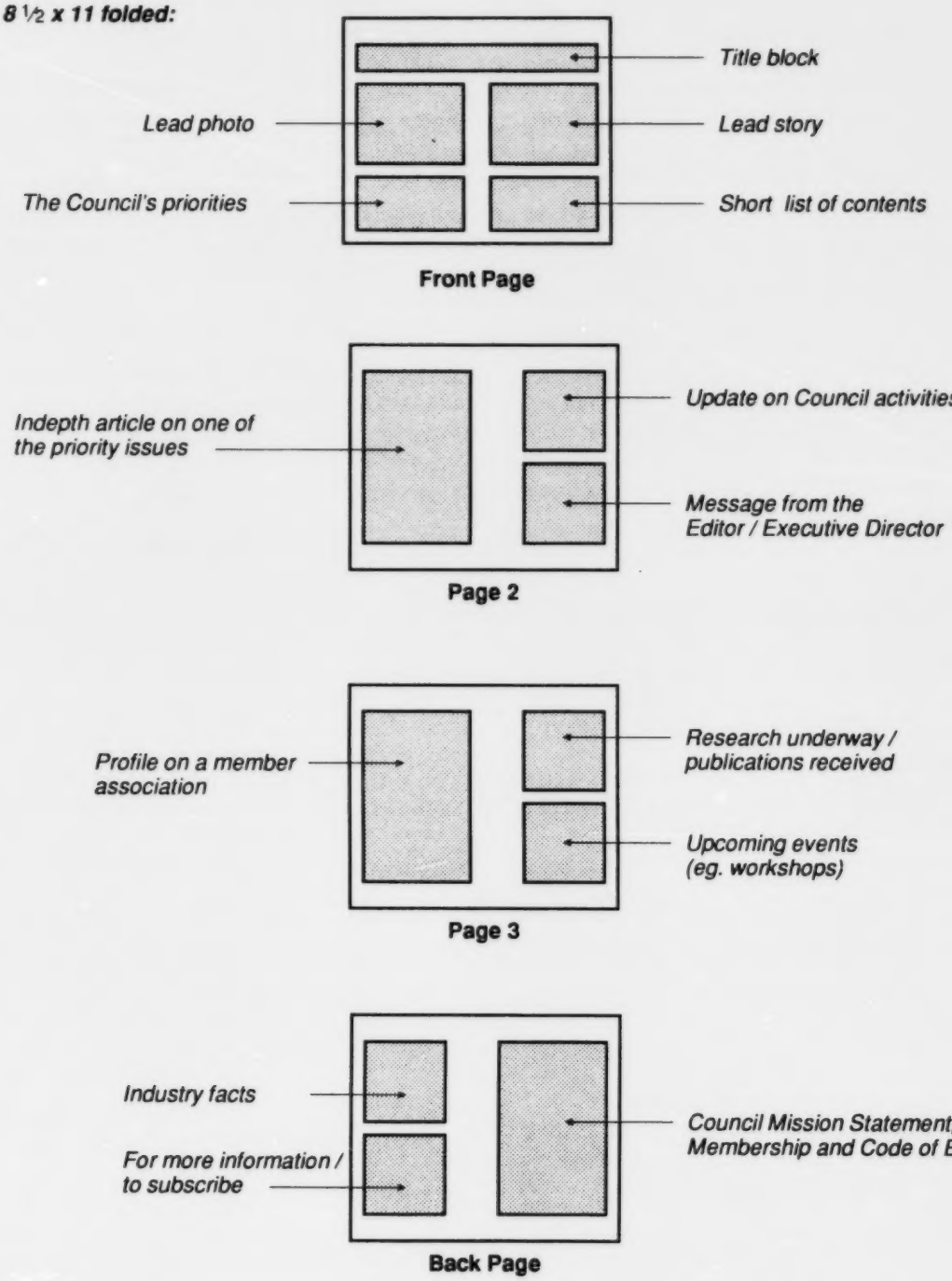
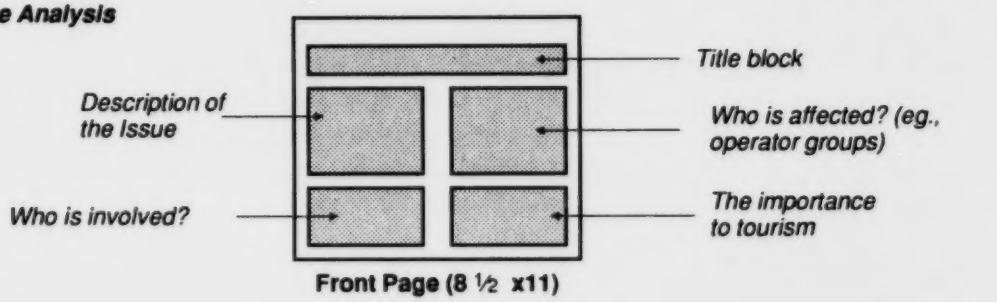
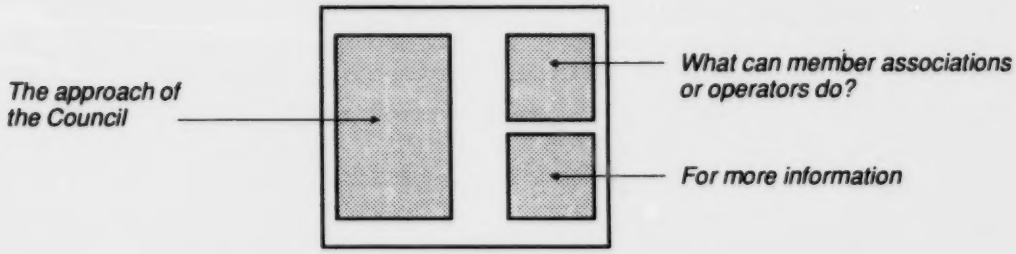


Exhibit 4.3 Sample Structure for Fact Sheets

Resource Issue Analysis

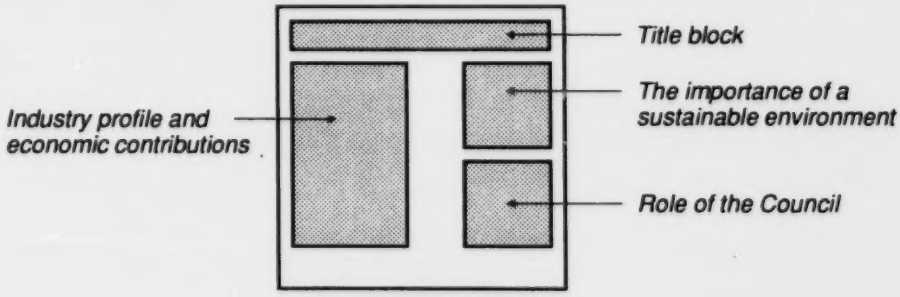


Front Page (8 ½ x11)

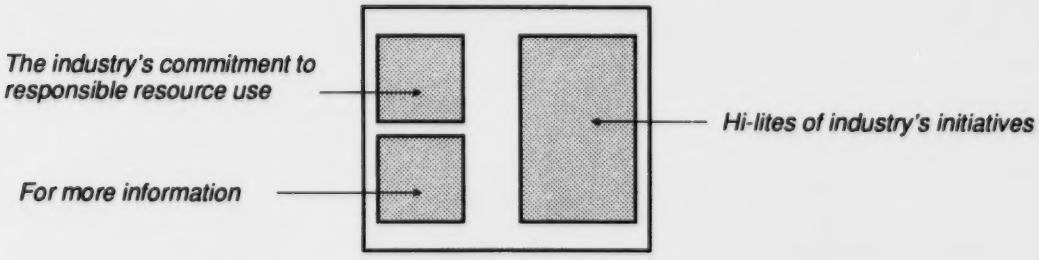


Back Page

Industry Profile


Title block
Industry profile and economic contributions
The importance of a sustainable environment
Role of the Council

Front Page (8 ½ x11)



Back Page

Exhibit 4.4: Sample Code of Ethics for the British Columbia Tourism Resource Council

Mission of the Tourism Resource Council

The Tourism Resource Council will work to maintain a sustainable environment which can support the tourism industry by providing an industry voice regarding proper natural resource management planning, legislation, regulations and practice.

Sample Code of Ethics

1. Member associations will promote responsible and sustainable use of our natural resources by the tourism industry and by the industry's clients. It is the member association's obligation to report violations of resource use regulations.

2. Member associations will promote adherence to regulations governing outdoor experiences of the province of British Columbia and will encourage all tourism industry operators to provide necessary information to clients on these regulations.

3. Member associations will participate, where possible and appropriate, in activities to maintain the resource base, protect and enhance habitat, and provide input to government on resource management.

4. The conduct between and among member associations will be governed by cooperation and ethical behaviour.

5. The Tourism Resource Council will cooperate with government and other resource users in working towards common goals.

6. The Tourism Resource Council will implement programs to support member associations and tourism industry operators in developing and offering products which contribute to the sustainability of the industry, environment and economy.

7. The Tourism Resource Council will consult with member associations in the formulation of all programs and policies.

Such a conference could provide excellent support to tourism operators. The costs, however, will be significant and the Council should carefully consider financial implications before proceeding. Properly structured, an annual conference could be largely self-supporting if it appeals directly to the needs of the industry.

The Council could serve a facilitating role in organizing workshops for member associations and individual operators. These workshops could involve skills training (e.g., Being Effective in Resource Management, Decision-Making, Negotiations in Resource Decision-Making) and issues management (e.g., The Future of Rivers in B.C., Salmon and Tourism in the future of B.C.).

Consultation Services

There are two key areas where the Council could provide consultation services to members directly. First, it would be important for the Council to assist local, individual members in dealing with resource issues at the local level. It would not be proper or effective for the Council to get deeply involved in such issues as it would detract from its province-wide mandate. However, the Council could serve an effective facilitation role by providing background information, contacts and referrals, and the like. This would be an important aspect of the Council's potential effectiveness for the industry and one which many association representatives pointed to as a gap in the current industry structure.

An important member service, and one which was raised by some sector associations, involves the facilitation role that a Council could play in resolving land/resource use conflicts between operator groups offering different products. An example of this was a conflict between wildlife interests, including guide outfitters and heli-hiking interests over the potential impact of helicopter activity on a major mountain goat herd in the Purcell mountains. In this case the Wilderness Tourism Council played a role in resolving this problem in such a way that all tourism operators in the area could maintain a common front on larger issues. While instances of this kind have been limited in the past, the growth in the industry suggests that such problems are likely to be a more frequent occurrence in the future.

Such a mechanism would be important to the effectiveness of the Council. If the industry could deal with internal problems in-house and with minimal media attention, then the common front provided by the Council on larger problems will be much more effective. It will also be noted and appreciated by government, when the industry can deal with such problems in such a way that government agencies do not have to attempt to deal with them. This would reduce the likelihood of government intervention in the form of regulations that may not be beneficial to the tourism industry as a whole.

The role that the Council could play is one of independent and objective mediation; that is, the provision of a cooperative environment within which the conflict can be resolved. In some cases this may require research support, particularly where resource use carrying capacity issues are at the heart of the conflict. The Council could also provide, where asked, a third party auditor from within the industry who does not have a direct involvement in the issue but does have an understanding of the industry. In a dispute between heli-ski operators and back country ski lodge operators, the representative from the Fishing sector might be asked to Chair a committee on the problem; conversely a conflict between salmon fishing operators and a nature tour operation might be mediated by a heli-ski operator.

4.2 Public Relations

A sound public relations program which presents a balanced and informative view of the tourism industry is an important role for the Council to play. Recent efforts of the Ministry of Tourism have resulted in a better understanding in government of the contribution tourism makes to the province's economy and the importance of the natural resources to the industry. The nature of the industry, its structure, its importance to regional economies throughout the province, and its dependence on the province's resource base are still not well understood by government, the public or other resource industries. Therefore, a public relations campaign which is aimed at increasing awareness of the industry and its increasing resource requirements is essential. The potential benefits of such a public relations program include:

- increased understanding of the industry's concerns and needs
- increased likelihood that the industry will be consulted in decisions that can affect their future
- greater appreciation of the industry's dependence on sound resource management practices and the need to sustain the resource base
- greater understanding of the contribution that tourism makes to the B.C. economy and society
- broader support for the industry generally.

The target audiences for the Council's public relations program should include government, its elected officials and agencies, the general public, the tourism industry itself and other resource industry associations. There are a variety of tools which the Council could consider developing. These include:

- industry fact sheets for general distribution
- a speaking program designed for specific target audiences

- selective use of the media (interviews, press conferences, articles, etc.)
- meetings between Council members and the executive levels of government and other resource industries.

The public relations program should be structured to be both informative and to advance the image/understanding of the industry and its resource dependency.

The Council should actively cultivate an image as a trade association with a concern for the environment that goes beyond a strictly selfish interest in the resources of the province. In all communications with government, other resource industry groups, and the media, the Council must demonstrate an understanding of the public interest and present a positive and constructive approach in pursuing the industry's interests. To do otherwise will damage the Council's reputation and ultimately render it ineffective. Maintaining such a position and image will require careful research of the facts around every issue that is addressed, a careful critique of data, especially data on the economic impact of tourism (when compared to other industries), and the maintenance of good communication with public advocacy groups around the province.

4.3 Advocacy Program

The ultimate objective of the Council should be to build sufficient rapport and trust with government agencies and other industries to ensure that:

- industry input is recognized and acted on with respect to resource management practices and initiatives

- resource management and regulatory agencies are willing to work with the industry and regard their concerns as legitimate and credible.

In general, the Council would be involved in advocacy activities on behalf of the tourism industry under four circumstances:

The Resource Council sets the agenda. In this case, the Resource Council adopts a pro-active approach in addressing resource issues (e.g., pursuing joint resource enhancement projects with government and other users).

Government sets the agenda. Examples include the activities of the Forest Commission, the Round Table on the Environment and Economy, and the Commercial Backcountry Recreation Discussion Paper. Here the Council is responding to government initiatives and providing an industry perspective. This would include both provincial and federal agencies.

Other Industries set the agenda. In many cases the activities of other industries will create an agenda that the Council will have to react to. For example, tree farm licenses issued to forest companies in the north may affect guide outfitters or fishing lodge operators, as could major mining development proposals.

Individual tourism operators set the agenda. In some cases where new ski resorts or backcountry lodges are proposed in sensitive areas, the Council may have to respond to public and media questions on the proposal.

The advocacy strategy, no matter what the issue, should be characterized by:

- face to face contact with the target audience (e.g., government or other industries) on the part of the Council itself or Council staff

- the need to address all levels of government (regional, resource managers, line ministry executives, deputy minister committees, cabinet and caucus meetings) in communicating industry's perspective.

Issues which industry associations have identified in this study as possible candidates for Council consideration are shown in Exhibit 4.5.

Exhibit 4.5: Resource Issues Raised by Industry for the Resource Council to Address

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- Provincial land use strategy
- Native land claims process
- Forestry impacts
- Mining impacts
- Preservation of wilderness areas
- Participation in Parks 90 and related processes
- Crown Lands backcountry commercial recreation policy paper
- Habitat enhancement
- Road access practices
- Integrated resource planning
- Tourism resource inventories
- User carrying capacities
- Environmental ethics

4.4 Research

Ongoing research will be an important program for the Council, particularly to support its advocacy and public relations efforts. Examples include:

- maintenance of economic, product, and market profile information on the tourism industry for use in public relations efforts
- issue specific research that may be necessary to develop a sound industry position on particular issues
- research on activities by the tourism industry and other jurisdictions to provide comparative data on resource management practices and concerns, trends in the tourism industry, and trends in industry development.

In some cases, research could be completed by staff of the Council as part of their normal day-to-day activity. In particular, some of the "pre-research" required to scope out issues should be readily achievable by Council staff. In other cases, external assistance would be required for the Council's research priorities. It is expected that over time, smaller studies could be budgeted by the Council itself. In cases where more extensive research is required, the Council would necessarily have to engage in collaborative efforts to implement the research requirements. This would mean financial support for research by government agencies, or by the operators or sectors most directly affected by a particular issue. In some cases where the credibility of data is crucial, research should be channelled through the newly established B.C. Institute for Sustainable Development. The Institute is meant to act as a clearing house for research on resource issues such that data on an issue is not tainted by the interests of one particular industry or point of view.

4.5 Administration

The Executive Committee would determine the general administrative program which in turn would be reviewed and endorsed by the full Council. The day to day functions of the Council would be carried out by the Executive Director. Key issues would be referred back to the Executive Committee when clarification and further direction is required. The Executive Director would be responsible for:

- establishing the Council office
- outfitting the office in a professional manner with letterhead/logo and other support materials
- staffing the office
- running of Council programs
- establishing and monitoring budgets

The primary functions of the Executive Director would be service to the Council in terms of issue identification, program design recommendations, budgeting, meeting organization, program implementation, and financial management.

Fund-raising would be an important function of the administrative program. While this business plan recommends start-up funding from government, the intent is to evolve quickly into a self-sufficient association where the industry assumes full responsibility for the costs incurred by the Council. Therefore a specific fund raising strategy would need to be developed from the outset of the Council's activities. This strategy should be developed by the Executive Director in collaboration with either the Executive Committee or a Fund Raising Sub-Committee of the full Council.

5.0 Financing And Implementation

An effective Tourism Resource Council fully representing the industry's interests will need to secure a stable funding source to cover the costs of the Council's programs, staff and office support functions. Until the industry determines that a Council generally structured as proposed in this draft business plan will meet its needs, it is premature to make specific recommendations concerning funding. Nevertheless, there are several considerations in financing the activities of the Council which will prove useful for industry in their deliberations on the establishment of a Council for the industry.

5.1 The Need for a Tourism Resource Council

Previous sections in this report have documented the perceptions of both industry (as represented by associations) and government for a Council. The majority of interviewees reported that a Council would help in many ways including:

- relieving individual associations of the demands of province-wide issues and enabling them to spend more time on resource concerns specific to their sector association or to local areas throughout the province

- from the perspective of government, providing a single, focused voice with whom they can interact, thereby reducing the considerable inefficiencies and inherent confusion in attempting to deal with several different industry spokespersons on any given issue, program or initiative that affects the resource base of the province.

The future of resource-based tourism is now recognized as a legitimate concern of the provincial government. Indeed, the Ministry of Development, Trade and Tourism has already allocated considerable resources to assist the tourism industry on several fronts including:

- funding opportunity analysis studies for sectors such as guide outfitters, salt and freshwater sportfishing, marine tourism, and guest ranches

- establishing a Sustainable Development Branch whose mandate is to encourage sustainable tourism development and ensure that tourism potential is considered in resource management and planning processes of government

- collaborating with industry on sector specific marketing programs (e.g., the fresh water sportfishing guide).

All of these initiatives are relatively new and reflect the emerging recognition of the importance of the natural resources to the tourism industry in British Columbia. The industry itself has increasingly recognized the need to ensure a sustainable resource base in order to maintain a viable tourism product and a competitive position in the marketplace. The industry also recognizes that resource issues are usually very complex, involving many stakeholders and requiring a significant amount of time on the part of associations and operators. Industry organizations are thus finding that their agendas must not only address market and product development issues but also resource management practices.

Currently the tourism industry organization in British Columbia is largely based on sector or product lines (e.g., freshwater sportfishing lodges and outfitters, guide outfitters, guest ranches, and hotel, motel and campground operators) and/or tourism regions. Apart from the Wilderness Tourism Council, which was informally organized, there is no province-wide industry body which can adopt a provincial perspective in representing the tourism industry's natural resource interests. At the same time, most associations recognize that this support from an industry body with a province-wide perspective would compliment and enhance their effectiveness.

The sheer volume of the resource concerns of the industry, together with the complexity of most issues, is predicted by many associations to further strain the capacities of associations to address these concerns on behalf of their members. Some advised that there is a limit to the time and resources which associations can devote to these issues -- given that they must also operate their tourism businesses. Several factors have been identified by associations as underscoring the need for a Council which assumes responsibility for province-wide concerns. Most frequently cited were government initiatives regarding commercial backcountry recreation use, a possible land use strategy, native land claims, a general increase in the public's sensitivity to sustainable resource use, and a general increase in the competition for use of the province's natural resources. Under these circumstances, a Tourism Resource Council can help to:

- provide a more effective industry voice on province-wide resource issues affecting the industry
- reduce duplication of effort on resource issues by individual associations
- focus industry's efforts on priority issues
- reduce the demands on the executives of member associations
- provide a forum for promoting a sustainable environment -- not only to government, the public and other industries, but also to tourism industry operators

- provide a mechanism for research and education programs which can assist tourism industry operators and offer a sound foundation for industry policies and strategies regarding resource use.

5.2 The Funding Environment

The majority of industry associations contacted during this study indicated that financing a Council through individual association members fees was unlikely in the short term. They suggested that the Council would need to "prove" its effectiveness before associations would be willing to increase their membership fees for Council support. At the same time, most associations suggested that funding of the Council activities by industry was preferable to government funding in order to ensure autonomy and independence.

The likelihood of government funding, even in the form of supporting the start-up activities and therefore creation of the Council, is unlikely. Government is already allocating considerable funds to supporting resource-based tourism through industry opportunity studies and the activities of the Tourism Sustainable Development Branch, and to raising the profile of the needs of the tourism industry in the Province's resource management policies and programs. The Province undertakes these activities because it has judged that these are in the public interest in terms of providing an appropriate investment and operating environment for the tourism industry to thrive and prosper. At the same time, the Province does not fund the operations of industry groups. It regards this as an industry responsibility. Thus, the general approach of the Province is to collaborate with industry on specific projects (e.g., this study itself) in ways which it deems to be helpful to the industry and to the public interest at large.

Therefore, regardless of the association's comments that individual member fees are not available to support the activities of a Council, it is suggested that the industry will have to secure funding from private sources. In this regard, there are many innovative approaches which could be investigated ranging from fund raising activities to collaborative, cost-reduction strategies such as linkages to the university community. It is expected that core funding would have to come from the industry itself. In so doing, the industry would demonstrate to all observers that it is committed to addressing the resource concerns it faces.

5.3 Start-up Funding Needs

Minimum start-up funding needs for the Council are likely to be in the order of about $145,000. This would cover the costs of a full time Executive Director and part time secretary/administrative assistant located in Vancouver area office space, as well as costs that will be incurred for newsletters, fact sheets, and the general operating activities of Council members and staff. The start-up funding requirements are estimated as follows:

Budget Item	Estimated Cost
Executive Director	$55,000
Secretary/Admin. Assistant	15,000
Office space	7,000
Equipment	15,000
Travel	20,000
Office expense	10,000
Printing/Graphics	2,000
Total	**$145,000**

This budget assumes that Council members would pay for their own travel costs (to be covered by the association) while the Executive Director travel costs would be covered by the budget. Equipment is relatively high in the start-up year and reflects the need to provide a full range of support equipment (e.g. computer, laser printer, copier, and fax). The benefits of this equipment investment would be found in the capacity of the Council to produce professional quality reports and newsletters, which are essential for their program activities. It is assumed that a wage of $55,000 per year for the Executive Director would be the minimum required to attract the high quality person required.

Actual out of pocket costs for supporting the Council's activities could potentially be reduced through leveraging and other funding options discussed below.

5.4 Options for Financing the Tourism Resource Council

There are a number of options which the tourism industry could consider for financing the activities of the Council. Some of the ideas which have been identified during the course of this study are summarized below.

Member Association Fees. This should be one of the main sources of funding for the Council. Member associations would raise their contribution through a "surcharge" on their association membership dues. A formula will be required which determines the share each member association pays on an annual basis. This formula should be developed by the Council.

Contract Research and Research Partnerships. The Council could work in collaboration with government to undertake studies where the interests of both parties are complementary. It could involve management and administration of research contracts by the Council for a small fee with majority funding available from government agencies. Alternatively, this could also involve Council participation on the Steering Committees for government studies which are of interest to the Council. In either case, necessary research is completed for which the Council itself does not have to absorb full costs.

Collaboration with the University Community. The Centre for Tourism Research of Simon Fraser University has indicated an interest in working with the tourism industry to support their efforts for establishing a Tourism Resource Council. Considerations for such support include the provision of office space in their downtown campus, utilization of graduate students for background research activities, newsletter production, and support for workshop/conference organization. While this potential is very much at the "idea" stage, it would appear that this is an avenue worth investigating given the benefits for both the industry in underwriting the costs of the Council and the university in strengthening its own programs related to tourism and resource management.

Fee for Service Activities. Some options for the Council to consider as a mechanism for fund raising include a fee basis for Council services such as:

- consultation services
- a newsletter/issue update service (more focused than the general newsletter approach suggested in the business plan)
- a Council news service offered on a subscription basis to government agencies, other industries interested in resource issues, and the tourism industry itself (this would be a more in-depth publication than the newsletter which would report on Council activities and general news regarding provincial resource management of interest to the tourism industry sectors).

Special Subsidies. Examples here might include a small allocation from hotel tax revenues dedicated to the activities of the industry regarding resource issues, or contributions from the cruise and airline sectors.

Product Raffles. This is a technique which is used effectively by such organizations such as the GOABC, Ducks Unlimited, and Trout Unlimited. Operators, through their associations, would donate a trip each year for raffling at key travel trade shows or annual meetings. For example, each association could donate a trip as part of its annual dues.

Industry Services. There are several potential services which the Council could consider as the means of helping to finance their operations. For example, it could offer a "one stop shopping" service for operators interested in creating films or videos on their product. Providing the same service for government as a support for their marketing activities is another possibility. The Council in this case would charge a commission/fee for service.

In considering any of these ideas for funding support for Council activities, the Council must be careful not to lose sight of its primary mandate and objectives as a service organization for the tourism industry. Thus, in the preparation of the long term funding strategy, a careful

evaluation of all funding options should be prepared by the Executive Director for the Council's consideration. For example, the Council's efforts to pursue fee for service activities may deflect its attention from the more important mission of representing the industry and promoting sustainable resource use in the province.

A possible funding model for industry to consider is illustrated in Exhibit 5.1, showing the sources and applications of funding for a Council. It differentiates between start-up versus long-term funding requirements and demonstrates how the industry could fund the activities of the Council through leverage/partnerships with other organizations. At this time, the start-up funding approach which offers the greatest potential appears to be one in which:

- staff salaries, travel, and some aspects of newsletter/fact sheets production would be financed through the industry itself

- office space and support for newsletter/fact sheet production, research and education programs, and workshops/conference organization would be financed through collaboration with the SFU Centre for Tourism Policy and Research and/or the Ministry of Development, Trade and Tourism. SFU, for example, could provide graduate student assistance for newsletter and fact sheet preparation, they could also provide help to Council staff in organizing workshops/conferences and collaborate on research and education programs.

- the costs of the workshop/conference activities could be underwritten through attendance fees from tourism operators and other attendees

- collaboration with government agencies and others could help leverage funding requirements for fact sheets, workshops, and research/education activities of the Council.

By pursuing this start-up funding model, it is expected that the financing requirements from industry itself could be reduced to about $75,000 to $90,000.

Other funding sources (Exhibit 5.1) are suggested to be more long term in nature. Their potential is probably best explored only after the Council has been established and demonstrates that it is an effective mechanism for the tourism industry for resource issue resolution.

Exhibit 5.1: Tourism Resource Council - Possible Model for Sources and Application of Funding

Funding Sources	Staff Salaries	Travel	Office Space	Newsletter/Fact Sheet Preparation/Production	Resource/ Education Programs	Workshop Conferences
Start-up						
Member Association Fees	X	X		X		
Attendance Fees (Tourism Operators and others)						X
Collaboration with SFU Centre for Tourism Policy and Research			X	X	X	X
Contract Research and Research Partnerships				X	X	X
Educational Partnerships (e.g., PRIT)				X		
Government Agencies				X	X	X
Long-Term						
Special Subsidies	X	X				
Fee for Service						
- Resource-related consultations	X	X				
- Newsletter Subscription fees				X		
- Industry Services	X	X				
Product Raffles	X	X				

5.5 Implementation Plan

A two-stage process is recommended for implementing the proposed business plan contained in this report. In Stage One, the industry must determine the need for a Tourism Resource Council and whether it will establish such a Council. This will require consultation on this proposed business plan and the implications for funding the Council. Stage Two involves establishing the Council and refining the business plan in accordance with the results of Stage One.

Stage One - Reaching Consensus on Establishing a Tourism Resource Council

The suggested Stage One approach involves seven steps as described below.

1. The WTC, in collaboration with the Ministry of Development, Trade and Tourism, should distribute this report to all tourism industry associations and potential funding and program support organizations (e.g., the Centre for Tourism Policy and Research, the Pacific Rim Institute of Tourism, government agencies).

2. The WTC should meet with industry association representatives, government agencies, and other organizations including the Centre for Tourism Policy and Research to:

    - confirm interest in proceeding with a Tourism Resource Council
    - determine interest in participating in an industry-wide meeting to discuss the draft business plan
    - discuss a tentative schedule for the industry-wide meeting
    - determine the potential level of support and commitment from the Centre for Tourism Policy and Research, the Pacific Rim Institute of Tourism (PRIT), and government agencies.

3. The WTC, in collaboration with the Ministry of Development, Trade and Tourism, should organize an industry-wide workshop to consider and evaluate the business plan and reach agreement on establishing a Tourism Resource Council. The recommended date for such a workshop, taking into account the available times for the tourism industry, is November/December of 1991.

4. The WTC, together with the Ministry of Development, Trade and Tourism should prepare an agenda and background materials for the workshop -- including a working paper describing the results of the consultation process in Step Two above. The suggested attendance for the workshop is as follows:

    - invitations to all association Boards of Directors and Executive Directors
    - provisions for associations to invite key members of their associations who may not be on the Board of Directors

- invitations to interested parties including the SFU Centre for Tourism Policy and Research, PRIT, and other government agencies (provincial and federal).

A suggested agenda and format for the meeting is as follows:

- a presentation to summarize the results of the study and the proposed busines plan
- the group is divided into small groups to discuss a specific topic
- each small group then presents the key findings of their discussion to the large group (all attendees)
- the topics for these discussions would be to:
    - confirm the need for a council
    - refine the proposed management plan
    - refine the proposed programs
    - address funding
- the large group then discusses the next steps.

5. Hold the industry-wide workshop to determine agreement on establishing a Tourism Resource Council. The recommended outcome from the meeting, assuming a positive decision, should be:

    - agreement from association representatives to consult with their member organizations on the Business Plan to establish a Tourism Resource Council
    - preparation of a summary report (2-3 pages) of the workshop results which can be used by association representatives in their own consultation process
    - appointment of an ad hoc committee including WTC representatives to provide a point of contact for association representatives during the course of their consultation process.

6. Tourism industry associations should consult with their membership at their next regular general meeting following Step 5 above and determine if members agree that their association should participate in the Council. Representatives from other member associations should attend such meetings so that a rational and effective discussion can take place. For example, a representative from the Fishing Resorts and Outfitters, and Heli-Ski operators could attend the Guide Outfitters meeting.

7. Pending the results of the association consultation process, each association should appoint representatives (and alternates) to the Tourism Resource Council.

Stage Two - Establishing the Tourism Resource Council

The following implementation steps are recommended for start-up activities of the Resource Council in its first year of operation.

1. The Council should hold its initial meeting to revise and finalize the business plan as appropriate and finalize start-up funding.

2. The Council should develop and implement appropriate mechanisms for start-up funding. This will include collection of dues from member associations, agreements with support organizations, incorporation and other requirements as appropriate.

3. Once funding is achieved, the Council should hold its first formal meeting at which it would:

    - proceed with incorporation
    - establish its membership
    - develop a Executive Director job description
    - establish a hiring process for an Executive Director
    - establish general priorities for the first year of operation (recognizing that it may require 3-6 months to fill the Executive Director position).

4. A subsequent meeting should be held once the Executive Director has been selected to establish the priorities for the first year of operation. This would involve the issue management process and setting the focus and content for the Council's programs.

ANNEX A

INTERVIEW GUIDE

Current Situation

Is the use and management of the resource base a concern for your organization? If so, is it site specific (impacting a few members), or more general in nature (impacting most of your members), or both?

Is the management of the resources identified in your organization's mandate/constitution/bylaws? Are changes to accommodate this need being considered?

If input on resource management decisions is required, how does your organization decide how much effort (time, staff, budget) to devote to this input? i.e. how does it priorize resource management, or does it?

How does your organization provide input to new policies or regulations being put forward by government?

Does your organization have budget allocated to deal with resource management decisions? If so, approximately how much? If not how do you address the problem of funding?

Can you give examples of resource management concerns or decisions that have arisen which your organization has/has not acted on. What was the outcome? Satisfactory/non-satisfactory? To what extent? Were your needs met? Were your interests reflected in the management decisions?

Experience With Other Organizations

Has your organization worked directly or indirectly with other organizations on resource concerns in the past? If yes, please give some examples. What was the outcome of these efforts? Would you continue to work with these groups in the future? If not, why?

Are you aware of the Wilderness Tourism Council? If yes, what do you know about it? What experience have you had working with the council? What aspects of the council were effective for your needs and what areas need to be improved? If you haven't worked with the Council, why not?

Government Communications

How does your organization communicate with the various government agencies? Has this been a positive or negative experience? Please explain.

Many government agencies are developing policies and regulations which affect resource based tourism businesses.

- How does your organization respond to these situations?
- Are you aware of policies before they become final?
- Does your organization participate in the public review of policies?
- What can be done to improve the input and review of policies by your organization?

Mechanism for Addressing Resource Issues

Is there a need for the tourism industry to address resource management concerns and decisions? If not, why not? If yes, which of the following mechanisms should be considered and why:

1. Continue as is with existing organizations addressing issues as they arise.
2. Re-focus an existing organization to represent resource concerns of the tourism industry as a whole.
3. Establish a new organization to represent resource concerns of the tourism industry as a whole.

If you selected option 2 or 3, what might the mandate of such an organization include? What should it exclude? If you selected option 2, which organization should this be? What are the resource issues to be focused on and what should the priorities be?

How should the organization be structured to ensure that it does not overlap with your organization?

What types of programs and services could the organization offer that would benefit your organization and members? What should the priorities be?

Do you have thoughts as to how the mechanism could be funded?

Beyond the development of a mechanism for resource interests, what other services does you organization/membership require to improve its ability to deal with resource issues?

Thank-you for considering these topics. Your input is crucial and we will look forward to talking to you by phone in the near future.

ANNEX B

INTERVIEW RESULTS

B.1 Sector Associations

The findings presented below relate specifically to resource-based associations.

Current Situation

- Two levels of involvement by organizations:

  1. **Peripheral** - when issues arise, may act as lobby group, but majority of efforts allocated to running the organization. Although resources are a concern, they are not a focus of the organization.

  2. **Very resource-focused** - 50-80% of office staff time is allocated to resource issues. Protection and management of the resources are identified in organization's bylaws.

- Issues address both individual operators as well as province-wide initiatives.

- Assistance to members in ensuring that a fair process is established which encourages participation, dialogue and is cooperative, not confrontational.

- May step in initially to establish process, then step back leaving individual operators to deal with day to day issues.

- No budget specifically allocated to this function.

Experience with other Organizations

- Organizations do not typically collaborate on issues, they may communicate with each other but do not prepare joint submissions.

- Either the organization is aware of WTC or not. For those who are aware, they felt WTC's profile too low and they did not know what the WTC was doing. They felt that information on how the WTC would benefit the organization and its members was lacking.

Communication with Government

- For the organizations involved peripherally with resource issues, involvement with government was on an as required basis. The implication is that these groups were not as effective as the other groups in communicating with government.

- For the organizations which are very resource-focused, the communication with government is very extensive. The freshwater lodges primarily deal with regional staff and to a limited extent with Victoria. GOABC deals with management at regional and Victoria level as well as with elected officials.

- Both of these organizations prepare briefs, letters, and position papers to respond to government initiatives. They are very pleased with their ability to develop a line of communication with government which is two-way. They feel they have established credibility with government and are often called upon to comment on new plans or policies/regulations.

Mechanism for Addressing Resource Issues

- **Peripheral Groups** - either don't know or suggest using existing organization.

  - Priorities, forestry impacts

  - Programs, provide profile for tourism in integrated land use decisions and document economic impacts of tourism sectors.

  - Funding, membership dues, or use of crown lands fees from new licensing program.

- **Resource Focused Groups**. Two suggestions were identified.

  - no need for a new group, use Sustainable Development Branch, Ministry of Tourism and establish advisory committee which represents sectors.

  - need a mechanism to function between the sector organizations-either existing WTC or new organization.

  - these groups do not want to abandon their current efforts with respect to natural resource issues as they will always play a major role for these associations.

  Priorities are:

  - logging impacts, restricting access/road closure programs;
  - develop lines of communication between tourism and other ministries;
  - fact sheets, research.

  Programs include educating new operators in ways of dealing with resource issues and information on economics.

  Funding is a concern as organizations already underfunded and do not feel that they could go to their members to fund another organization.

B.2 Regional Tourism Associations

Current Situation

- All associations identified resource issues as a concern for their organization.
- Most associations said that resource concerns were important to 50% or more of their members.
- for the most part, Regional Tourism Associations did not have management of resources identified in their mandates, constitutions or bylaws
- one association, High Country, has a resource management committee
- North by Northwest is most active in pursuing resource management issues and are currently considering terms of reference to hire a "Resource Planning Consultant".
- In general, the majority of associations identified marketing as their primary concern and delegated resource issues to groups within the organization, referral to sector associations or regional advisory group processes, or to individual members.
- Neither a budget nor resources for resource issues were identified by any association.
- Examples of resource concerns which have arisen within regional tourism associations include:
    - mineral rights;
    - fishing resort concerns;
    - logging operations;
    - integrated resource management (eg. Valemont area);
    - waterfront redevelopment (Nelson);
    - lakeshore harvesting guidelines; and
    - local resource use plans.

Experience with Other Organizations:

- Most regional tourism associations work with other organizations on resource concerns on an informal basis (eg. letters of support for member groups or individual members, tabling of reports, etc.).
- More active associations in the resource area (eg. Cariboo Tourist Association) sometimes work with other associations including sector organizations and some public interest groups.

Awareness of the Wilderness Tourism Council

- Most tourist associations are aware of the WTC, but know little about it or its programs.
- Only one association identified that they consulted WTC and used their data.

Government Communications

- Communications with government on resource issues was not generally pursued by associations.

Mechanism for Addressing Resource Issues

- Associations were unanimous in identifying the need for the tourism industry to address resource management concerns and decisions.

- Three associations suggested re-focusing the WTC to "make it work"

- Two associations were unsure about WTC operations and had no opinion concerning a re-focused versus new organization approach.

- Two associations suggested a new organization with a broader scope.

- One association suggested a new resource council with representation from tourism, forestry, mining, and resource manufacturing (eg. pulp and paper).

- The most common comment concerning mandate and priorities was to ensure formal lines of communication to member organizations.

- Some suggested that careful consideration must be given to representation of the tourism industry at the regional level (i.e., there was some concern that the relationship between a provincial mandate versus a regional mandate needed to be carefully considered).

- For the most part, regional tourism associations did not think there would be any overlap with their organizations, given their marketing emphasis.

- Program and service considerations included ideas for:

  - a contact/resource person for issue awareness
  - the ability for regional tourist associations to consult on issues
  - communication to member organization on upcoming issues
  - general information on the resource base
  - provide data to organizations
  - education for member organizations on how to deal effectively with government agencies
  - raising the profile of tourism and land use debates
  - better information on the real economic value of tourism
  - lobbying
  - educational and related technical support for individual support for individual members

Potential Funding Sources

- Most regional tourism associations suggested that it would be very difficult to find money from their members for a resource council or other mechanism.

- Some suggested that there should be little or no government funding to ensure that the resource council has a free role in commenting on issues.

- Funding ideas ranged from:

    - user fees
    - use of hotel accommodation tax
    - Crown Land licensing fees
    - 50/50 split between government and industry

B.3 Accommodation and Cruise Related Organizations

Current Situation

- Resource issues are not specifically identified as a priority

- The associations do not, as an organization, address resource issues, nor is it referenced explicitly in their mandate or bylaws.

- There are no budgets or resources established for this area.

- One association recently established an environment committee (largely concerned to date with waste management in urban areas)

- In the case of one association, groups of members have addressed resource issues (eg. campgrounds). Examples of recent resource related issues include:

    - the future of the Gulf Islands for tourism
    - fishing licensing practice
    - campground related issues

Experience with Other Organizations

- The associations are aware of the WTC but have no idea about what the WTC has accomplished.

- The associations sometimes work with other organizations, but usually not on resources issues.

- Some segments of one association work with (or even belong to) sector organizations dealing with resource issues.

Mechanisms for Addressing Resource Issues

- The idea of a province wide organization addressing resource management issues on behalf of tourism received strong support but on a qualified basis, with qualifications as follows:

- formal communication is vital between this organization and member groups
- the focus should be objective, with well balanced membership (eg. including labour representatives in other economic sectors), and with a relatively "narrow" mandate

- Some suggested that it is worth considering the re-creation of a TIABC type organization with resource management as a focus.

- One association suggested that "corralling" associations under one umbrella would be a major step forward in the province.

- Programs and service suggestions included:
  - information and expertise support on resource issues.
  - advocacy for the tourism industry on resource issues (i.e., lobbying)
  - technical support for individual members
  - strong education and communication programs
  - representations to government on a balanced basis, taking into account the needs of other economic sectors.

Potential Funding Sources

- The general consensus was that funding from the private sector would be difficult to achieve except where members or members groups might have a direct, vested interest.

- These associations suggested underlying support from government of 50% or more.

- One association suggested reducing government funding to some parts of the tourism industry and reallocating those funds to the council.

- Funding from not only the Ministry of Tourism, but also other agencies (eg. Parks) would be a reasonable course to follow.

B.4 Findings - Government

Tourism Industry Contact

- All agencies noted that the tourism industry has an important role to play in resource management issues.

- Government involvement with the industry has been sporatic with contacts mostly focused on individual operators as issues arose.

- Agency staff (particularly Parks, Forests and Tourism) identified a lack of strategic thinking by industry, creating problems for government agencies in understanding what the tourism priorities were.

- The fragmentation of the tourism sector and the lack of a clearly recognized organization that could speak for the entire industry was identified as a reason for the fragmented approach between government and industry.

- The main organizations cited as having contact with the agencies were:

    - The Wilderness Tourism Council
    - GOABC
    - Fishing Resorts and Outfitters Association

Contact with the Ministry of Tourism

- Contact with the Ministry of Tourism on resource planning issues was a new experience for agencies.

- The Sustainable Resources Branch was appreciated but was lacking in necessary staff and budget to properly fulfil its mandate.

- Forests made positive mention of the participation from this Branch on issues such as the Old Growth Forests Task Force.

- The lack of an inventory of tourism resources was identified as a short-coming related to input from the Ministry of Tourism. Ministry of Tourism staff confirmed this short-coming and noted their short-term objectives to secure inventory information as soon as possible. While this was being undertaken, Ministry of Tourism staff would set priorities on "precedent-setting" issues.

- The perception of some agency representatives was that there was still uncertainty as to the degree of commitment from the Ministry of Tourism on resource issues. They noted that this function was not yet officially mandated in the Ministry's legislation.

- They also noted that a "wait and see" approach was appropriate given the past performance of the Ministry as a "cutter of deals", often with too little regard for long term environmental/land base impacts.

Awareness of the Wilderness Tourism Council

- While most respondents were aware of the WTC, their actual experience with the organization was limited or non-existent (likely reflected by the fact that much of the WTC's action has been focused on the senior bureaucrats or politicians).

Mechanism to Deal with Resource-Based Tourism Issues

- There was unanimous agreement from agencies that an organization was needed to represent the resource interests of the tourism industry as a whole.

- Two respondents suggested that the tourism industry needed the equivalent of the Council of Forests Industries or British Columbia Chamber of Mines.

- For those that had an opinion on structure, the council approach was preferred since it would build on, rather than replace or duplicate existing sectoral associations.

Issues to be Addressed by the Organization

- Impacts of forestry and mining on tourism.

- Tourism industry and land use management including retention of land base quality, carrying capacity, codes of conduct.

- Inventory of tourism resource values.

- Involvement in integrated resource planning processes.

- Protection of wilderness and park areas important to tourism.

- Visual resource management.

- Commercial recreation tenures.

- Ensuring access to key tourism areas (eg. shorelines, bikeways, river corridors)

- Interface with natives on land claims and other native/tourism resource issues.

Programs/Services to be Offered

- Education Programs oriented to industry, government and the public on tourism resource issues and the importance of tourism to the B.C. economy.

- Lobbying; i.e. advocating the industry position to government.

- Communication and strategic planning involving linking the sectors together so that they can speak with one voice on high priority issues and policy matters.

- Research, on tourism economics and tourism resource management.

- Industry "point of contact" for government through a permanent office and supporting staff.